

# *That Next Step*

Preparing for a career in  
Film, Television, Theatre and Radio

An Honors Thesis

By

Lynn Downey



Wendy Mortimer, Advisor

Ball State University  
Muncie, IN

May 2004

Graduation May 8, 2004

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## *Abstract*

When I look back, it is so clear. At age 3, my favorite things were dressing up and playing make believe. At age 10, in a children's version of *A Midsummer's Night's Dream*, my best friend was the lead and I was a tree, but I sure did know all of her lines... just in case. At 14, leaving my first opera, I was on a literal high—dancing and singing with joy. Yet, it wasn't until playing Elizabeth Proctor in Arthur Miller's *The Crucible* my senior year in high school that I realized acting could even be an option for my life and work. When visiting Ball State on a whim a few months later, I saw a show and that was it. I said, "I want to do this and I want to do this here." Yet, even then I thought, "Maybe this is just four more years I get to do theatre, then I'll do what I have to do." After four years I couldn't be more thankful and excited to begin a career as a professional actress. I love acting for what I learn and how I am changed by it, for the dedicated and amazing people I have the privilege to work with and for the way we can affect others through not only the stories we tell but how they are told.

My first week at Ball State I walked into my advisor Rodger Smith's office and said, "Hello, my name is Lynn Downey and I want to be the best actress I can be." He was a little blown away, a little doubtful and a little confident with, "Ok, lets get to work." I've worked very hard to learn as much as I could, to find my own process and to do good work in shows and class work. I feel I have grown in so many ways, especially by allowing myself to be vulnerable, learning to try, fail and try again, and by persevering to understand and translate that understanding to action.

Looking into the world I feel I am ready begin my career as an actress. This thesis is to equip me with the tools I will need to survive and thrive as a professional, artist and person. Business-wise, I ordered headshots, prepared a professional resume, artistic resume, and cover letters, and created a five-year plan. For my artistic pursuits, I organized and worked a monologue repertoire functional for a diverse range of possible theatrical auditions, a reel of my film work and a voice-over demo tape. For my personal life I have started a journal that I write in weekly as way of debriefing, place to record my journey and look back on my process and progress.

Mr. Rodgers says, "I hope you will feel good enough about yourselves that you will want to minister to others and that you will find your own unique way of doing that." I believe I have found that. As I look ahead, it is so clear.

## *Acknowledgements*

-Many thanks to my advisor Wendy Mortimer, for her time, faith and truth of guidance. Her challenges were blunt and bold, but never without humanness and compassion.

-Many thanks to Rodger Smith for the four years of wondering, working, fighting and finding. I'm just glad we both came out on top.

-Thanks to Michael O'Hara for his confidence in my potential as well as expert assistance with my resumes and cover letters.

-A very special thanks to Brian Eckstein for producing my voice demo tape. It is very probable my career will be possible because of the lucrative voice over skills I learned from Brian.

-With awe and appreciation, I'd like to thank my fellow students and artists in the Theatre Department. Your dedication, talent and potential inspire me daily. We have always been partners, never opponents. I have learned so much with and from you and you have made my college experience better than I could ever ask or imagine. Thank you for four years of life together. I love you all.

-Thanks to my roommates Dawn Casey and Whitney Spencer for teaching me what it really means to be a friend and helping me become one.

-An eternal thanks to my family Bill, Judy, and Trent Downey. You are more than supportive; its as if we are all in this together. You are incredible listeners, active and astute counselors and when you need to be, healthy distractions. I love you for who you are and for who you make me want to be.

-Praise to the Lord for His strength, grace and love. I claim Your promise in Jeremiah 29:11, "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.'" My I ever, "Search for the Lord and for His strength, and keep on searching," Psalm 105:4.

# *Headshots*



Lynn Downey

# *Resumes*



# Lynn Joanna Downey

---

5210 Canterbury  
Muncie, IN 47304  
(765) 631-4788

2611 N. Skyline  
Blmgt, IN 47404  
(812) 333-5265

**Education:**

B.S., Ball State University, Muncie, IN  
*Emphasis: Theatre: Acting Option.* May 2004

Magna Cum Laude, Honors College, Deans List, V. B. Ball  
Center for Creative Inquiry, Alpha Psi Omega.

**Related Experience:**

Indiana Public Radio, Muncie, IN  
*Radio Voice & Receptionist.* June 2003- May 2004

- Self-motivation, evaluation & improvement.
- Professional communication skills.
- Telephone & computers skills.

Ball State University Theatre Department, Muncie, IN  
*LA Showcase Assistant Coordinator.* March-May 2004

- Budgeting time & meeting deadlines.
- Organizing group responsibilities.
- Microsoft Excel, Word, iMovie, Internet Skills.

Virginia B. Ball Center for Creative Inquiry, Muncie, IN  
*Member of Production Company.* August-December 2002

- Product development & management for published DVD.
- Script development, digital media production, directing, editing, post-production & publicity.
- Team player & built positive group dynamics.

**Other Experience:**

Kid City Day Camp, Bloomington, IN  
*Camp Counselor.* Summers 1999-2003

Lucinda Jordan Chiropractic, Bloomington, IN  
*Receptionist.* May 2002-August 2002

**Volunteer:**

Harvest Soup Kitchen, Muncie, IN  
*Kitchen Helper.* May 2003-May 2004

**Related Skills:**

- Outgoing & Confident
- Enthusiastic
- Quick Study
- Detail Oriented

References available upon request.

Lynn Joanna Downey  
ljdowney@bsu.edu

5210 Canterbury  
Muncie, IN 47304  
(765) 631-4788

2611 N. Skyline  
Bloomington, IN 47404  
(812) 333-5265

### *References*

Mr. Brian Eckstein  
Production Manager  
Indiana Public Radio  
(765) 285-5888

Mr. Rodger Smith  
Coordinator of Acting and Associate Professor  
Department of Theatre and Dance  
Ball State University  
Muncie, IN 47306  
(765) 285-4030

Mr. Michael O'Hara  
Assistant Professor  
Department of Theatre and Dance  
Ball State University  
Muncie, IN 47306  
(765) 285-8751

Darrell Stone  
Director of Volunteer Services  
Indiana University  
Bloomington, IN 47401  
(812) 336-4679

# *Cover Letters*

Mr. Voice Agent  
Agency B  
200 Sunset Blvd.  
Los Angeles, CA 90210

Dear Mr. Voice Agent

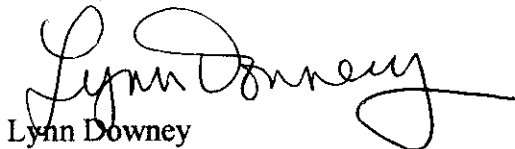
Thank you so much for taking time to review my voice reel. I hope you will find it worth your while.

Graduating from Ball State University with a BS in Theatre, I've had opportunities to perform diverse roles on stage, in film and commercials, along with classes in acting and voice. Working for Indiana Public Radio, recording weekly voice tracks and promotional sketches gave me additional experience.

I hope you hear in my voice an energy you would like to work with and talent that can grow and be shaped. My professional motto is "You've gotta work really hard to get to play for a living." And that's my plan.

I would love to hear from you. At your convenience I can be reached at (765) 631-4788 or [ljdowney@bsu.edu](mailto:ljdowney@bsu.edu).

Thank you again for your consideration,

  
Lynn Downey

5210 Canterbury  
Muncie, IN 47304  
March 28, 2004

Mrs. Internship Hire-er  
Internships R Us  
300 Sunset Blvd.  
Los Angeles, CA 90210

Dear Mrs. Internship Hire-er

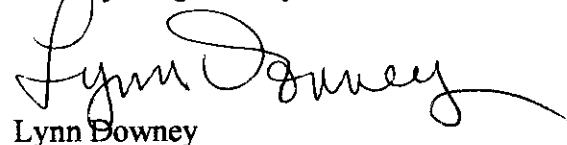
Greetings! Thank you so much for reviewing my resume for the internship PA position for *The West Wing* at Warner Brothers. Being a part of this award winning team would be, to risk a cliché, "A dream come true." I have qualities and experiences that would contribute to the success of this production. I look forward to a chance to meet you.

Working together to accomplish a job well done is one of life's most rewarding experiences, something I can sense occurs in the production of *The West Wing* by simply watching the show. I have worked in a variety of situations that have taught me a wide range of skills. While working as a receptionist I learned to communicate professionally, multi-task and organize both data and duties. At the VBC Center for Creative Inquiry I was a part of a team, which created, produced, and published an educational DVD. From delivering coffee to brainstorming to writing to digital editing, there was not job I did not try. I developed key organizational and artistic skills such as patience, dedication and problem solving. During college I was a significant contributor to the university theatre production season, and I learned to balance a hectic schedule with flexibility and grace to adjust to changing needs and different personalities. As a camp counselor I learned to put other people's needs in front of my own while staying energized and positive. With these skills I know I will pick up quickly my responsibilities and execute my tasks to help continue to create the quality of work seen in *The West Wing*.

I am looking forward to translating these qualities and experiences into a professional and artistic career. My motto is "You've gotta work really hard to get to play for a living." And that's my plan.

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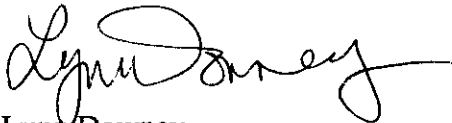
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I hope you hear in my voice an energy you would like to work with and talent that can grow and be shaped. My professional motto is "You've gotta work really hard to get to play for a living." And that's my plan.

I would love to hear from you. At your convenience I can be reached at (765) 631-4788 or [ljdowney@bsu.edu](mailto:ljdowney@bsu.edu).

Thank you again for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Lynn Downey". The signature is fluid and stylized, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Lynn Downey

# *Five Year Plan*

## Yr 1-The Apprenticeship

- Economic Goal** 20,000  
What to do to get it?  
1. 15 hrs/week  
2. voice over  
3. Setup financial system  
4. internship → to solo  
5. babysitting / odd jobs for cash
- Training Goal** Take Class  
What to do to get it?  
1. credit  
2. Purdue course  
3. explore experience  
4. budget \$1k  
5. weekly time aside
- Professional Goal** Internship  
What to do to get it?  
1. Internship  
2. Meet + Connect  
3. Alumni  
4. Hollywood Prayer Network  
5. Obedient film
- Physical Goal** Hollywood  
What to do to get it?  
1. No sugar in house  
2. read online  
3. only eat what is healthy  
4. discover healthy habits  
5. get in shape
- Spiritual Goal** Spiritual support group  
What to do to get it?  
1. Visit Churches  
2. Hollywood Prayer Network  
3. Seek Church + Ministry  
4. meet people @ HPN / industry  
5. meet people @ church
- Personal Goal** Setup business  
What to do to get it?  
1. Weekly Journal + a printed  
2. Inspiration + Bulletin board  
3. Accountability of money  
4. Accountability of money  
5. Weekly time aside

## Yr 2-The Apprenticeship

- Economic Goal** 24,000  
What to do to get it?  
1. Day Job @ Studio  
2. Voice over work  
3. babysitting / odd jobs for cash  
4. teach @ art center for kids  
5.
- Training Goal** Act in a film  
What to do to get it?  
1. audition  
2. audition  
3. audition  
4. audition  
5.
- Professional Goal** Agent  
What to do to get it?  
1. Audition  
2. audition  
3. audition  
4. audition  
5.
- Physical Goal** Triathlon  
What to do to get it?  
1. Look for places to take  
2. budget \$  
3. budget time  
4.  
5. maintain
- Spiritual Goal** Find a church  
What to do to get it?  
1. Visit many  
2. travel to people  
3. HPN  
4. HPN  
5.
- Personal Goal** Sign language  
What to do to get it?  
1. ASL club in school  
2. ASL actors  
3. ASL club in school  
4. ASL club in school  
5. Find teacher

## Yr 2-The Apprenticeship

- Economic Goal** 26,000  
What to do to get it?  
1. Day Job  
2. Voice over work  
3. odd jobs  
4. INVEST  
5. Commission
- Training Goal** Actor  
What to do to get it?  
1. Find voice work  
2. Take auditioning class  
3. audition  
4. Get system  
5.
- Professional Goal** Contract  
What to do to get it?  
1. Agent  
2. practice @ home  
3. follow up contacts  
4. take commission class  
5. network
- Physical Goal** Workout  
What to do to get it?  
1. Discover passion  
2. Do on time  
3. Do something every day  
4.  
5. maintain
- Spiritual Goal** Kids  
What to do to get it?  
1. Find kids group  
2. Start a teaching group  
3. church school group  
4. once a month to church  
5.
- Personal Goal** Perform music  
What to do to get it?  
1. start playing together  
2. look for location  
3. practice life style music  
4.  
5.

## Yr 4-Turning Pro

- Economic Goal** 28,000  
What to do to get it?  
1. Move to part time  
2. get commission  
3. extra work  
4. Find Non-Job  
5. Commission
- Training Goal** Create a group  
What to do to get it?  
1. Organizational Ability  
2. Create group  
3. topic want to learn  
4. dead time  
5. Local live set
- Professional Goal** TV work  
What to do to get it?  
1. audition  
2. follow up contacts  
3. network  
4.  
5.
- Physical Goal** Workout  
What to do to get it?  
1. Workout  
2. eat great  
3.  
4.  
5. evaluate
- Spiritual Goal** Do public service  
What to do to get it?  
1. find one  
2. Weekly commitment  
3.  
4.  
5.
- Personal Goal** Huge album  
What to do to get it?  
1. Maintain Shape  
2. Find place to live  
3. Join Group / Club  
4. Find partners  
5.

## Yr 5-Professional Focus

- Economic Goal** 30,000  
What to do to get it?  
1. Start own job  
2. Commission  
3. extra work  
4. extra work  
5. TV / film work
- Training Goal** Produce work  
What to do to get it?  
1. Find \$ 10k  
2. find actor / etc.  
3. location  
4. Production equipment  
5.
- Professional Goal** Get enough work  
What to do to get it?  
1. TV  
2. Non-movie work  
3. voice over  
4. audition  
5. Under 5 min film
- Physical Goal** Workout  
What to do to get it?  
1. Workout  
2. eat great  
3. Do something every day  
4.  
5. evaluate
- Spiritual Goal** Share experience in public setting  
What to do to get it?  
1. have something to say  
2. HPN  
3. place in church  
4.  
5.
- Personal Goal** Start uniting people  
What to do to get it?  
1. Collect letters / notes  
2. Look for public setting  
3. independent work  
4. Collaboration?  
5. promote by partner



Yr1-Trng Gl Est Cost	Yr1 Prof Gl Est Cost	Yr1 Physl Gl Est Co.	Yr1 Sprtl Gl Est Cost	Yr1 Prsnl Gl Est Cost
Yr2-Trng Gl Est Cost	Yr2 Prof Gl Est Cost	Yr2 Physl Gl Est Cost	Yr2 Sprtl Gl Est Cost	Yr1 Prsnl Gl Est Cost
Yr3-Trng Gl Est Cost	Yr3 Prof Gl Est Cost	Yr3 Physl Gl Est Cost	Yr3 Sprtl Gl Est Cost	Yr1 Prsnl Gl Est Cost
Yr4-Trng Gl Est Cost	Yr4 Prof Gl Est Cost	Yr4 Physl Gl Est Cost	Yr4 Sprtl Gl Est Cost	Yr1 Prsnl Gl Est Cost
Yr5-Trng Gl Est Cost	Yr5 Prof Gl Est Cost	Yr5 Physl Gl Est Cost	Yr5 Sprtl Gl Est Cost	Yr1 Prsnl Gl Est Cost

Economic Plan	First Year	Second Year	Third Year	Fourth Year
<b>Income</b>				
Investments	—		INVEST.	
Loans	2000	—	—	—
Alternate Income	3000	1000	—	—
Day Job	20,000	22,000	25,000	16,000
Professional	—	1000	5,000	10,000
<b>SUB-TOTAL</b>	<b>+1-25,000</b>	<b>+1-24,000</b>	<b>+1-30,000</b>	<b>+1-26,000</b>
<b>Expenses</b>				
Pictures and Resumes	50	50	500	
Mailings of P/R	100	200	200	200
Other Advertising (cards, meals, tickets)	100	100	200	200
Video Advertising (reel)				
Managers/publicists	—	150	750	1500
Dues	—	—	800	50
Professional Literature	100	100	100	100
Clothes	500	100	200	300
Food	1200	1900	1800	1800
Shelter (1bdm vs. split)	4000	4000	7000	7000
Phone	600	700	700	900
Computer/FAX				
Utilities	800	800	800	800
Moving Costs	2000	—	200	—
Insurance (Personal)	—	5000	5000	5000
Loan Payments	—			
Training (from above) [wkshops, classes, clothes]	500	500	500	500
Professional (from above)			12250	
Spiritual (from above)			8150	
Personal (from above) [Gym, Hair, entertainment]	1300	1400	1500	1600
Transportation	2000	2150	2150	2250
car, Insurance, repairs, taxis/subway	10,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
<b>SUB-TOTAL</b>	<b>-23,400</b>	<b>+1-22,050</b>	<b>+1-26,900</b>	<b>+1-25,000</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>+1-1600</b>	<b>+1-</b>	<b>+1-</b>	<b>+1-</b>

more expenses here than might  
realize — but — End

**Lynn Downey's**  
Radiantly Dazzling, Spectacularly Brilliant, Incredibly Remarkable,  
Outstandingly Specific and Wholeheartedly Committed  
**Five Year Plan**

*May 2004 – May 2005*

May 8- May 31: Travel to LA

Goals: Perform LA Showcase

Go to Beach

Follow up with contacts made in Showcase

Follow up with connections for INTERNSHIPS

Shadow Lucy Bansley for a day

Connect with BSU Alumni

Look for \$\$ work

Nail down housing/Roommate?

Information on being and extra/be and extra?

Find out from Uncle connections to Warner Brothers: PA position? Other?

Watch movies- Thursday night is Winebrenner Film Fest West

June-August: Return Home and Work

Goals: Make Money, Work Out, Continue Acting work, Go to Weddings

Work: Temp Agency? Chilli's? Catering? Babysitting? Gardening?

Work Out: With Trent every day. Pilates, Weights, Running.

Acting: Books on Business, Books on Art

Weddings: Find a date.

September 1, 2004: Move to LA

September: Get adjusted.

Goals: Find and buy a car

Move in and get settled

Look for a church

Connect with Hollywood Prayer Network

Connect with BSU Alumni

Look for work- find Babysitting and odd jobs

Celebrate Birthday! 22!

Reconnect with ALL LA Showcase contacts

\*TAKE LINDSAY CROUSE CLASS\* (audit class?)

PHYSIQUE stuff: Where to work out? What classes to take?

October-December: Begin

Goals: Begin working at \$\$ Job

Meet and hang out with people

Continue to look for Internships

Continue taking class OR try out for theatre (Depending on job situation)  
Connect with Agents and Managers and Casting Directors

January: Act it up

Goals:

February

March \*\*\*SIX MONTH ANNIVERSARY!!!\*\*\*

Goals:

Reevaluate Jobs situation: Nights vs. Days/Theatre vs. Time to audition  
New Color Pictures

*May 2005 – May 2006*

Get Agent and begin auditioning hard core for whatever

Have Sag card

*May 2006 – May 2007*

Day player roles, guest appearances

*May 2007 – May 2008*

(?) Featured roles

*May 2008 – May 2009*

Get auditions for “major” Sit-coms/ 1 hour dramas

$$\begin{array}{r} 400 \\ \times 4 \\ \hline 1600 \text{ month} \\ \times 9 \\ \hline 14400 + \\ 3000 \\ \hline 17400 \end{array}$$

40

$$\begin{array}{r} 4 \\ 150 \\ \times 9 \\ \hline 1350 \end{array}$$

# *Monologues*

## *Monologues*

### **Classical:**

Shakespeare: *Troilus and Cressida*

Moliere: *Learned Ladies*

### **Modern:**

1920-1960: *The Crucible* – Arthur Miller

Comedy: *Chapter Two* – Neil Simon  
*Sylvia* – A. R. Gurney

Drama: *Bad Infinity* – Mac Wellman  
*Spinning into Butter* – Rebecca Gilman

Rhythm: *Food Chain* – Nicky Silver

### **Dialect:**

Am. Stan.: *Pride and Prejudice* – Jane Austen

Cockney: *Gut Girls* – Sarah Daniels

NY Jewish: *The Loman Family Picnic* – Don Margulies

Southern: *The Last Night of Ballyhoo* – Alfred Uhry

*Cressida:*

Hard to seem one; but I was won, my lord,  
With the first glance that ever—pardon me:  
If I confess much, you will play the tyrant.  
I love you now, but till now not so much  
But I might master it. In faith I lie:  
My thoughts were like unbridled children, grown  
Too headstrong for their mother. See, we fools!  
Why have I blabbed? Who shall be true to us,  
When we are so unsecret to ourselves?  
But though I loved you well, I wooed you not—  
And yet, good faith, I wished myself a man,  
Or that we women had men's privilege  
Of speaking first. Sweet, bid me hold my tongue,  
For in this rapture I shall surely speak  
The think I shall repent. See, see, your silence  
Cunning in dumbness, in my weakness draws  
My soul of counsel from me. Stop my mouth.

*Troilus and Cressida*

Shakespeare

*Henriette:*

I esteem you as far as esteem will reach, but there's an obstacle that hinders me from loving you. A Heart, you know, cannot be in possession of two and I perceive that Clitander has made himself master of me. I know he has much less desert than you, that I have ill eyes to choose him for a Husband and that I ought to be pleased with a hundred of your fine Talents; I perceive I'm in the wrong, but I can't help it. Love is not the effect of Merit; Caprice has its share in it and when anyone pleases us, we are often at a loss to say in what. If love went by choice and wisdom, then you would have my heart, but 'tis quite otherwise. I beg you'd leave me to my blindness [and not take use of the force that for your sake is put upon my obedience. Don't oblige my mother to exercise upon me by her choice the utmost of her Power.] Take back your love from me, and bear to some other the addresses of a heart so precious as yours.

*The Learned Ladies*

Moliere

1. Title: Ladies who have learned—not the natural or governed by emotions—looking for the wise way.
2. Where? Alone outside my father's mansion.
3. Time: Afternoon
4. Seen? Family around, inside. Unseen? Parental pressure
5. Arch: You're really great. But I don't love you. I know I should. But I don't cause love doesn't work that way. Go find someone who will love you. [And he's Theo. He's a total slime-ball, but the only way I can get him to leave me alone is to convince him I'm totally in love with him, but my stupid heart is pulling me away to someone else.]
6. Trigger: His sick "you know you want me" eyes.<sup>4</sup>
7. Moment before: He has just said "I love you..." touched me waist waiting for an answer.
8. Pocket: Locket from Clitander



*Elizabeth Proctor:*

Yes, it is a proper court they have now. They've sent four judges out of Boston, weighty magistrates of the General Court, and at the head sits the Deputy Governor of the Province. There be fourteen people in the jail now. And they'll be tried, and the court have power to hang them too. The Deputy Governor promise hangin' if they'll not confess, John. The town's gone wild, I think—Mary Warren speak of Abigail as though she were a saint, to hear her. She brings the other girls into the court, and where she walks the crowd will part like the sea for Israel. And folks are brought before them, and if Abigail scream and howl and fall to the floor—the person's clapped in jail for bewitchin' her. I think you must go to Salem, John. I think so. You must tell them it is a fraud. Let you go to Ezekiel Cheever—he knows you well. And tell him what she said to you last week in her uncle's house. She said it had naught to do with witchcraft, did she not? God forbid you keep that from the court, John; I think they must be told.

*The Crucible*

Arthur Miller

Goal: To prompt John to action

Scare Yes, it is a proper court they have now. They've sent four judges out of Boston, weighty magistrates of the General Court, and at the head sits the Deputy Governor of the Province. There be fourteen people in the jail now. And they'll be tried, and the court have power to hang them too. The Deputy Governor promise hangin' if they'll not confess, John. Switch to guilt him because of Abigail:

The town's gone wild, I think—Mary Warren speak of Abigail as though she were a saint, to hear her. Switch to remind him of her disgust for Abigail:

She brings the other girls into the court, and where she walks the crowd will part like the sea for Israel. Switch to anger:

And folks are brought before them, and if Abigail scream and howl and fall to the floor—the person's clapped in jail for bewitchin' her. Switch to pleading:

I think you must go to Salem, John. I think so. You must tell them it is a fraud. Switch to encouraging, helping, telling him he is able:

Let you go to Ezekiel Cheever—he knows you well. And tell him what she said to you last week in her uncle's house. Switch to confirming the truth:

She said it had naught to do with witchcraft, did she not? God forbid you keep that from the court, John; Switch to charging him with his responsibility:

I think they must be told.

*Deborah:*

(He reaches for her.)

Don't touch me.

(Pause.)

I don't want to feel anything.  
It's too painful. I don't want to be loved. I want to be feared.  
I want to destroy everything human  
in me. I want to become a monument  
to my own incredulity, and to the  
vileness and stupidity of the world.

(Pause.)

And if you  
so much as lay a finger on me  
I'll scream. So help me I will.

(He touches her with one finger.)

I've seen the world.  
I know what it is.  
I can't be fooled.

*The Bad Infinity*

Mac Wellman

*Sarah:*

I came here to get away from Lancaster. I mean, before I started there, I was just paternalistic. Now I'm fully aware that black people have agency and are responsible and can help themselves, but I think they don't do it because they're lazy and stupid. So back then, when I thought I had learned my lesson, I hadn't. I haven't. All I learned was how to appreciate black people. The way you might appreciate painting or a good bottle of Bordeaux. I studied them to figure them out. But that's no different than hating them. It's called objectification, Ross. And it relies on keeping the object of your investigation at bay. Look, this is... I've been struggling with this for a long, long time. I have. I thought I was fine, I thought I was making progress, until I got that job at Lancaster. Everything seemed different. All my newfound self-awareness and societal insight and... and all that crap, all that crap just flew out the window. So quickly. Because in the abstract, black people were fine. But in reality, they were so rude.

*Spinning into Butter*

Rebecca Gilman

**Goal:** Get it all out there. Tell Ross. Look, here I am. I give up. You see me? This is it. Here. I can't do it anymore. Tell me you feel the same way. I've never said this before, but I can't do anything else. There.

**Obstacle:** Consequences. Is he going to tell on me? He looks just simply horrified, he keeps on questioning me and scolding me. I hate the words that are coming out of my mouth. They aren't helping anything. This is the first time I have ever said it out loud. All of this stuff has been pent up. The words are just flying out without edit. ]

**Other:** Ross, a professor. He's really considerate of all peoples. Probably never had a thought as horrible as mine. We had a relationship this summer. Slept together, had a nice little fling, but now its over. He ended it recently when his old girlfriend came back. ( I sense some bitterness here.) Its late and he's here and there is some sexual tension, but I'm so mad, distraught, if I could explain this to anyone, if I could trust anyone with this it would be Ross. And I would never say it unless it was completely a dead end and I had nowhere to go.

**Tactics:** Blurt through it - just go!

#### *Shock/Confess*

I came here to get away from Lancaster. I mean, before I started there, I was just paternalistic. Now I'm fully aware that black people have agency and are responsible and can help themselves, but I think they don't do it because they're lazy and stupid.

#### *Blame myself*

So back then, when I thought I had learned my lesson, I hadn't. I haven't. All I learned was how to appreciate black people. The way you might appreciate painting or a good bottle of Bordeaux. I studied them to figure them out. But that's no different than hating them. It's called objectification, Ross. And it relies on keeping the object of your investigation at bay.

#### *Give-up*

Look, this is... I've been struggling with this for a long, long time. I have. I thought I was fine, I thought I was making progress, until I got that job at Lancaster. Everything seemed different. All my newfound self-awareness and societal insight and... and all that crap, all that crap just flew out the window. So quickly. Because in the abstract, black people were fine. But in reality, they were so rude.

#### **Expectation:**

She's given up... She can't do it anymore. A list? A bullshit bulleted list of how to solve racism... If only it were that easy, I would have been able to move on a long time ago. But it's not simple. You think you finally figured something out about yourself, about everyone else, and then it comes back wrong seven fold. I can't control it. I tried everything I knew how to try. I took the classes, I went to the rallies, I listened to the scholars, I had other racial associates. I was sorry. So sorry. For what my people had done to the others in the past. It had to end, and I would put a stop to it because it was my

fault. My fault by proxy. I wanted to do something. I wanted to help. I got a job to help underprivileged people. But my desire to help, as shown to me by people much smarter than me, was only a plot to again rate myself superior. I could give them what they needed or not. And at the same time, they took on group community clan. They were no longer individual, educated black associates. They were loud, lazy screaming groups of frenetic adolescents with no possible way to control. Some of them were nice, some fine, but the ones that weren't were just so bad. I found myself thinking that they were never going to achieve anything, that they were stupid, or their hair was stupid, or no wonder they were pregnant, or they didn't have any chance to achieve their goals, if they even had them. And I would look at this in my rational mind and just die. Cringe; want to chop it all out with an ax. I met with them individually, and many of them were sweet, but I could never get it out of my head that they were a "THEM." A group that couldn't be separated that had an image that was not based on individuals. They were all the same. I rationally knew they weren't but I couldn't help what I SAW. Aristotle says to figure out things by observation, and that's what I did. My system became so complex. I couldn't do anything without thinking about it, and I just couldn't handle it anymore. I moved to Vermont to escape. Not noble, not brave, but the only thing that I could do, the only thing left. And here, its going to happen again. It keeps coming back. And the thing of it is, I just can't accept that I am the only one around here dealing with it. Everyone has got to feel this way! It has to be... But no one will say anything, no one will admit it, its all hush hush. Come on!! Someone!!! Anyone, just admit its on your mind too, to let me know I'm not alone and I'm not diseased. I know I'm wrong, in my mind, but everything around me keeps putting the thoughts back into my head. I just can't do this anymore. None of it. And I don't know what to do. I just don't know. Ross. I trust you, to a degree. Look. Here. I've confessed it, and can't do anything about it. There. Its out on the table. Deal with it as you will. Its there and that's that.

*Jennie:*

You know what you want better than me George... I don't know what you expect to find out there, except a larger audience for your two shows a day of suffering... I know I'm not as smart as you. Maybe I can't analyze and theorize and speculate on why we behave as we do and react as we do and suffer guilt and love and hate. You read all those books, not me... But there's one thing I do know, I know how I feel. I know I can stand here watching you try to destroy everything I've ever wanted in my life, wanting to smash your face with my fists because you won't even make the slightest effort to opt for happiness—and still know that I love you.

That's always so clear to me. It's the one place I get all my strength from... You mean so much to me that I am willing to take all your abuse and insults and insensitivity—because that's what you need to do to prove I'm not going to leave you. I can't promise I'm not going to die, George, that's asking too much. But if you want to test me, go ahead and test me. You want to leave, leave! But I'm not the one who's going to walk away. I don't know if I can take it forever, but I can take it for tonight and I can take it for next week. Next month I may be a little shaky.

But I'll tell you something, George. No matter what you say about me, I feel so good about myself—better than I felt when I ran from Cleveland and was frightened to death of New York. Better than I felt when I thought there was no one in the world out there for me, and better than I felt the night before we got married and I thought that I wasn't good enough for you...

Well, I am! I'm wonderful! I'm nuts about me! And if you're stupid enough to throw someone sensational like me aside, then you don't deserve

as good as you've got! I am sick and tired of running from places and people and relationships...

And don't tell me what I want because I'll tell you what I want. I want a home and I want a family—and I want a career, too. And I want a dog and I want a cat and I want three goldfish. I want everything! There's no harm in wanting it, George, because there's not a chance in hell we're going to get it all, anyway. But if you don't want it, you've got even less chance than that...

Everyone's out there looking for easy answers. And if you don't find it at home, hop into another bed and maybe you'll come up lucky. Maybe! You'd be just as surprised as me at some of the "maybe's" I've seen out there lately.

Well, none of that for me, George... You want me, then fight for me, because I'm fighting like hell for you. I think we're both worth it.

[I will admit, however, that I do have one fault. One glaring, major, monumental fault... Sometimes I don't know when to stop talking. For that I'm sorry, George, and I apologize. I am now through!]

*Chapter Two*

Neal Simon



*Sylvia:*

You're something Greg. You really are. You bring me home, you get me all dependent on you, you spay me... You had me *spayed*, Greg. You destroyed my womanhood. And then, when I get over that, when I still decide that the sun rises and sets only in your direction, then suddenly you're packing me off to some boring nuclear family in Westchester county. Don't you feel guilty about this? I mean, shit. You think I'll forget you... You are so wrong, Greg! Read the *Odyssey* sometime. That guy was gone for twenty years, and when he finally got home, the first person to recognize him—before his nurse, before his son, before his own wife, dammit—was his dog! That dog was lying outside the palace for all those years, waiting for him, Greg. Lying on a dung heap just waiting for his master. And when his master finally showed, what did the dog do? He raised his head, wagged his tail, and died. I'll never forget you, Greg! Ever.

*Sylvia*

A. R. Gurney

**Sex:** Female **Age:** Three years in human years, 21 human years

**Goal:** She wants to convince, persuade Greg to let her stay with him in this place she loves.

**Obstacles:** Greg has made a decision and is not going to change his mind. She is very shocked and yet also very mad, so that is holding her back from expressing herself rationally. She loves Greg and this life he's brought her to, and yet she is so mad at him for just letting her drop, that she questions how true his love is. Also, this is the first time Greg has treated her as subordinate, not as an equal, so she no longer has the same position of authority.

**Tactics:** She tries to guilt, she blames, she reminds, she lauds, she yells at him to try to get his attention back. She gets defensive and intellectual. She questions him with things like, "But, I thought you loved me..." of course making him feel terrible. She tries to prove her devotion. She also over dramatizes the situation.

**Expectation:** This goal is so real to Sylvia. She wants it so bad, and it means a huge bunch to her. He loves Greg. She loves her new home. She doesn't want to live in the suburbs and she doesn't want to leave. The life she knows and loves it at stake here.

**Stakes:** Greg has his keys in his hands, and is ready to take her away. Her life is slipping through her paws. She would be shipped off to some new family without being allowed saying goodbye to friends or anything. She knows that there must be a glimmer of doubt in Greg's mind, though, or he wouldn't have allowed her to talk for this long. So she knows she has to convince him, and do it quickly or else her life, as she knows it will be no more.

**Other:** Greg is man in his early 50s, who cannot find meaning out of the life he has lead for the past 25 years. He was a husband, father, and provider. He is about to have somewhat of a mid-life crisis. He has enjoyed his job in the past, but his boss wants him to change and to selling currencies. He cannot touch currencies, so he doesn't

understand this. He cannot find meaning in life anymore. That is, until he meets Sylvia. She is this frisky little puppy, who he sees and talks to as a woman. (All the characters in the play do.) Greg falls in love with this young exciting creature and begins to see his life in a new way. He takes walks in the park, or at night when all is quiet, he plays with her, he meets all sorts of new people who have dogs. His life is revolutionized. Greg is a wonderful owner. He lets Sylvia do so many things she wants to. And she knows she can take advantage of him, because he is so enthralled with her. Greg really wants his life to regain meaning, and though out the play, Sylvia helps him see what is important. Greg's wife can't understand him anymore. She doesn't understand why he doesn't like his job, what is causing him to question his life, and what he suddenly feels as if he needs all of the answers. When Sylvia comes, she hates Sylvia, because she is competition. His wife hates it. She says he tells things to Sylvia that he hadn't said to his wife in a long time i.e., "I love you, you look so beautiful today, etc." Greg realizes his wife is more important, so he chooses to make his wife happy, by promising to find Sylvia another home. In this scene, it is very hard for him to take Sylvia away, because he loves her, but he is resolute. Greg is very tall, skinny and bald. He had big eyes, which are very expressive. He kind shuffles like an old man at the beginning of the show, but his step gets sort of a bounce by the end of the show.

*Marital Status and History:* Sylvia is a dog. But, her owner, Greg, sees her as a woman. She is a mutt; mix of poodle and lab and some other mutt mixes. She was born to dog who lived with a family in a big neighborhood that had a lot of other dogs in it, including her father. She had some other brothers and sisters, but they were sold before her. The family that owned her mother kept her for two years, but she was then sold to another family. They lived out in the country, and Sylvia liked to play, but got lonely for the others. The family that bought her had a very snotty nasty kid, who didn't treat her very well, and then they had a baby, too. They didn't really pay much attention to her once

the baby was born. The family went into the city to visit relatives, when they went to the park, and let Sylvia run around. She went off with a bunch of other dogs, then ran around more, and then lost her family. She went back with some of the other street dogs and lived with them for two weeks. She was in the park, very hungry one day when she saw Greg. She was attracted to his food, but he was such a nice looking human, so when he began to lead her, she went with him willingly. Sylvia has never been married.

*Educational Level:* Primarily, Sylvia was educated by her mother and her family. She was taught well, and was always a good little doggie. She knew a few tricks, like sit and stay and roll over. Nothing too advanced. She was house trained, but still has accidents when she gets nervous. She also was exposed to a lot those two week she lived on the streets of New York. She had to find her own food, keep warm at night, keep away from the mean bad dogs, etc. She became a little hardened. As seen in Greg's eyes, Sylvia is a very witty and attractive girl. She is intelligent and learns quickly. She also know which limits she can push, and which she can break. She keeps herself mysterious, so she can get her way in a lot of circumstances. She is very smart and very focused.

Realizing: You're something Greg. You really are.

Accusing: You bring me home, you get me all dependent on you, you spay me...

Blaming: You had me *spayed*, Greg. You destroyed my womanhood.

Laud, then guilt: And then, when I get over that, when I still decide that the sun rises and sets only in your direction, then suddenly you're packing me off to some boring nuclear family in Westchester county.

Yell to get his attention: Don't you fell guilty about this? I mean, shit.

Realize, so annoyed about his ignorance: You think I'll forget you... You are so wrong, Greg! Read the *Odyssey* sometime.

Rationally prove devotion of her race: That guy was gone for twenty years, and when he finally got home, the first person to recognize him—before his nurse, before his son, before his own wife, dammit—was his dog! That dog was lying outside the palace for all those years, waiting for him, Greg.

Dramatize: Lying on a dung heap just waiting for his master. And when his master finally showed, what did the dog do? He raised his head, wagged his tail, and died. I'll never forget you, Greg! Ever.

*Amanda:*

I hadn't eaten anything yet, so I stopped at the diner on my corner, for some breakfast, and I picked up a newspaper so I'd have something to do.

I was reading my paper when the waiter come over and asked if I was... *alone*. Well! It was obvious I was *alone*! I was sitting there, in a booth, by myself—did he think I thought I had an imaginary friend with me?! I was *alone*! Did he have to rub it in? Was he trying to be funny? Did he think he was, in some way, better than me? It was in his tone. He said, “Are you alone?” But what he meant to say was, “You’re alone. *Aren’t you!*?”—And I can’t imagine that he’s not alone every single day of his miserable, *pathetic* life! He has terrible skin. And it’s not attractive. Not eh way bad skin, or at least the remnants of bad skin, is attractive on some people. On some men!! It’s never attractive on women—have you noticed that? Just one more example of the injustices we are forced to suffer! If we have bad skin, we’re grotesque! Let a man have bad skin and he can be Richard Burton! I HATE BEING A WOMAN!!

I’ve strayed.

The point is this waiter has terrible skin, and greasy hair and his breath stinks of something dead and shi face is entirely too close to mine, and he insults me with his breath and his tone of voice and asks if I’m alone. I feel my face go flush and I want to rip his head off! I’d *like* to pull his hair out, only I’d never be able to get a decent grip—it looks as if it hasn’t been washed in a decade! I want to pick up my butter knife and stab in his sunken, caved-in chest! But! I simply respond, (*Grandly:*)

“No, I’m married, thank you.” (*Pause.*)

I realized, now, of course, that my answer was illogical. I realize that it was inappropriate. But, at the time, it was all I could think to say.

Well, he leans back and, really, in the most supercilious manner, he leers at me and intone, “I meant, are you eating alone.” “I KNEW WHAT YOU MEANT!” I KNEW WHAT HE MEANT! I don’t know why I said what I said, I just said it! He made me sick. I hope he dies. I shouted, “I KNEW WHAT YOU MEANT!” And I am not a person who shouts, generally. I don’t like shouting. It hurts to shout and it hurts to be shouted at. My mother shouted quite a bit and I always thought the veins in her neck looked like the roots of a tree. But I shouted. Everyone looked at me... because I was standing. I don’t mean to be standing. I don’t remember standing, but I was standing. I must’ve leapt up when I shouted. So I was standing and everyone was staring at me. I just stood there in that diner, for what seemed like hours, and then, with all the composure and dignity I could muster, which was considerable, I said, “I’ve changed my mind!” And I left. *(A long pause.)*

I was all the way on forty-third street before I realized that I’d left my purse.

*The Food Chain*

Nicky Silver

*Elizabeth:*

You are too hasty, Sir. You forget that I have made no answer. Let me do it without farther loss of time. Accept my thanks for the compliment you are paying me, I am very sensible of the honour of your proposals, but it is impossible for me to do otherwise than decline them. I am perfectly serious in my refusal.—You could not make me happy, and I am convinced that I am the last woman in the world who would make you so. I thank you again and again for the honour you have done me in your proposals, but to accept them is absolutely impossible. My feelings in every respect forbid it. Can I speak plainer? Do not consider me now as an elegant female intending to plague you, but as a rational creature speaking the truth from her heart.

*Pride and Prejudice*

Jane Austin

Ellen:

I pawned all my books today, but it doesn't matter. It wouldn't have mattered in the end what I'd said or five hundred of us had done. We'd still have been out of work. They'd still have got their way—those people with their schemes and funds and clubs and allowances—all thought up out of fear—out of a fear that we, the ones who made their wealth might get out of hand. And I'm left trying to explain myself, "But, Ellen, at least she found them all work." Yes, but in service—in service. I could tell by the look on their faces that they couldn't see anything wrong. Why should they? After all isn't that what we're here for? You service your husband and your children. What's wrong with servicing those deemed better than you—at least you get paid for it. I don't want to keep arguing and kicking against it. What's the point when all you damage is your foot. Who am I to call the others fools, when I am the biggest laughing stock of the lot—actually believing that I had any say over what happened to me or anyone else.

*Gut Girls*

Rebecca Gilman



*Doris:*

On the day I was married the world showed every sign of coming to an end. It rained—no, poured. Thunder. Cracks of lightning. Big Pearl S. Buck tidal waves. You get the picture. Did I turn back? Did I cancel? Did I say never mind, no thank you? A good omen, my mother told me. There had never been such a terrifying convergence of weather post-Noah; a good omen. Hail, did I mention hail? Like my mother's matzo balls falling from the sky shouting Don't! Don't! each time a knaidel smacked the roof of the rented limo. A better omen still, my mother said, hail. What about sunshine?, Momma?, I asked, what about a sunny wedding day? Also a good omen, my mother said. (*A beat.*) I began to distrust her.

*The Loman Family Picnic*

Donald Margulies

*Reba:*

Higher education can lead to insanity.

You remember, Adolph. One of the Feigenbaum girls. They lived on Georgia Avenue just across the street from the trolley barn. There were seven of them. One more hideous than the next. But she didn't go insane because she was ugly! In fact she was the least hideous one. Viola was her name. Viola Feigenbaum. And she was the smartest, too. At least, she was the only one that went on to college. She attended Peabody Normal, studying to be a teacher. But then she went crazy in the train.

Well, her Papa put her on the NC at St. L to Nashville so she could start her second year at Peabody Normal and she was as sane as you or I right this minute. Then one hour after they left Terminal Station, she took off every stitch of her clothes and ran up and down the aisle of the day coach naked.

She was NOT hot. I don't like your tone, Sunny. They had to make an unscheduled stop in Rome to remove the poor thing from the train, rolled in a tablecloth!

*The Last Night Of Ballyhoo*

Alfred Uhry

# *Film Reel*

# *Voice Demo*

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